

WEST HOLLYWOOD HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES - JULY 16, 1998
WEST HOLLYWOOD PARK AUDITORIUM

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. CALL TO ORDER

The West Hollywood Human Services Commission was called to order by Chairperson Steven Davis at 6:00 p.m., Thursday, July 16, 1998, in Plummer Park Hall A, 7377 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Steven Davis, Teresa DeCrescenzo, Bob Graney, Pamela Komac,
John Nieto, Shirley Roberts, Renée Rosenfeld
Excused: none
Absent: none

A quorum was present at all times. Staff present included Lloyd R. Long, Director of Human Services; Daphne Dennis, Social Services Administrator; Thomas R. West, Tamar Springer, Diane Kahn-Epstein, and Jeff Book.

C. POSTING OF AGENDA

The Secretary reported that notices for the meeting had been posted as required.

D. PROCEDURE FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Persons desiring to address the meeting were asked to complete a request form.

II. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. SOCIAL SERVICES FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 1998-2000

1. STAFF REPORT

Following up on questions left over from the July 14 public hearing, Daphne Dennis [1] distributed information on 12-step meetings held in West Hollywood; [2] clarified the distinction among the Russian Community Center, the Association of Soviet Jewish Emigres, the Russian Jewish Community Cultural Center, CBD College, and Chabad; [3] distributed a statistical report from the Shanti educational program; [4] reviewed the background of proposed funding reductions for

Foundation House; [5] presented additional information about programs proposed for funding for the first time, including STORE, AIDS Healthcare Foundation, and Project New Hope; and [6] discussed adjustments to the scope of services for Bet Tzedek Legal Services.

2. COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Commissioners Davis and Nieto noted for the record that they would not be participating in any discussion or vote regarding AIDS-related funding, due to a conflict of interest arising from their employment by an affiliate of one of the agencies proposed for a social services contract.

Commissioner Graney said the City is fortunate to have so many qualified agencies seeking funding, and how unfortunate it is that some inevitably will be disappointed because requests for contracts exceed the amount of funding available.

Commissioner DeCrescenzo recommended that each commissioner give a brief summary of their reaction to the funding recommendations, and summarized her own reaction by saying that it appeared that staff had closely followed the results of the needs assessment survey, and that she was likely to support the recommendations with only minor changes.

Commissioner Roberts said that the Social Services Subcommittee had reviewed the recommendations and found very little disagreement with them. Commissioner Davis, speaking only with regard to the recommendations that are not AIDS-related, agreed that staff had followed the needs report closely and that the recommendations dovetailed closely with city priorities.

Commissioner Graney said that the recommendations are in the neighborhood of what the community wants, based on the needs survey; that it is devastating that there is not additional funding for the homeless; and that he feels youth programs are underfunded.

Commissioner DeCrescenzo raised four specific areas of concern: [1] Foundation House, as a model program of its type, should be considered for additional funding unless the City is bound by previous decisions regarding the timing of planned reductions; [2] regarding whether the L.A. Youth Network and the Gay & Lesbian Center serve the interest of minors; [3] regarding the possibility of PAWS and the Alzheimer's Association being targeted for mid-year funding, whether Council had indicated that this was appropriate or not; and [4] ways of avoiding the relatively greater hardship that budget cuts impose on smaller agencies.

Daphne Dennis reviewed the amounts and timing of planned reductions to funding for Foundation House (formerly the West Hollywood Homeless Organization). Tom West noted that L.A. Youth Network had not directly addressed the question of minors in its proposal, and Commissioner DeCrescenzo recommended putting something regarding this constituency in the next RFP, with particular regard to youth ages 14-15.

Commissioner Graney asked why, if efficiency was a purpose of combining the senior center, disability, and board & care programs into a comprehensive services model, was there a proposed increase of approximately \$100,000. Daphne Dennis said this is due to the expanded staff that would provide the comprehensive services, and the expanded duties of the Senior Center Director and the Activities Director.

Commissioner Rosenfeld said the needs of the lesbian and women's populations need to be looked at, and that there is no funding targeted for these communities in the recommendations, particularly since the proposals include a zero-funding recommendation for the COEP program at the Center. There is no proposal, for interest, for breast-cancer services.

Commissioner Komac expressed concerns that the percentage of funding for senior programs may be disproportionately high; that programs for youth and women may be underfunded; that there may be practical problems with the comprehensive services approach proposed by JFS; that agencies become complacent when they do not have enough competition; and that the city should administer more of its programs, along the lines of the taxi coupon program.

Commenting only with regard to non-AIDS-related items, Commissioner Nieto congratulated staff on the quality of its recommendations, and expressed concern over whether such a substantial cut in funding for Foundation House was realistic.

Commissioner Graney asked whether the \$75,000 restored to Foundation House's contract last year had been achieved by reducing other agencies or by an allocation from the city's General Fund, and Lloyd Long and Daphne Dennis confirmed that it had come from the General Fund.

With regard to the City's previous \$500,000 grant to Foundation House for the purpose of moving to new quarters, Commissioner Komac asked whether this was the same money transferred to the West Hollywood Community Development Commission for the benefit of Foundation House, and Lloyd Long confirmed that this was the same funding, which was loaned to the city's Redevelopment Agency for these purposes.

Commissioner DeCrescenzo moved that mid-year savings be prioritized for the Alzheimer's Association and PAWS L.A., in that order, with the agencies to be funded at levels at least equivalent to last year's contract. This was seconded by Commissioner Roberts, and passed 5 to 0, with Commissioners Davis and Nieto not voting.

Commissioner Roberts moved that \$2,500 be added to the recommendation for Alternative Living for the Aging (ALA), which would restore its contract to the same amount (\$22,500) as last year. This was seconded by Commissioner DeCrescenzo. After discussion, it was recommended that since the purpose of the restoration was to prevent a disproportionate impact on a small agency, these funds should be taken from the agency with the largest contract, which was Jewish Family Services. This was accepted by the maker and seconder of the motion, and approved on a vote of 6 to 1, with Commissioner Davis voting no.

Regarding Foundation House, Commissioner Graney moved to encourage City Council to recognize the plight of the homeless and to be as generous as possible in reducing this agency's \$120,000 cut by finding additional funding outside the social services budget. This was seconded by Commissioner Roberts. In discussion, Commissioner Komac said that she felt the reductions for Foundation House were too severe, and Commissioner DeCrescenzo said that while the cuts should be restored, it would be devastating to the other programs if the Commission tried to find \$100,000 to transfer to Foundation House. The motion was approved, 7 to 0.

Commissioner Davis moved to transfer \$9,000 from Los Angeles Free Clinic to the Gay & Lesbian Center youth program. There was no second.

Commissioner Graney asked if there were statistics available regarding the number of job placements through WHEST. Daphne Dennis reported that there were 150 placements reported by the \$134,000-contract agency, for a per-placement number of \$900, but that this figure is misleading because it does not reflect other aspects of the WHEST contract, such as participation in community-building and economic development, nor does it include persons who may have benefited from WHEST services but found jobs elsewhere, and thus are not included in the placement report.

Commissioner DeCrescenzo moved to increase the recommendation for AIDS Healthcare Foundation by \$13,000; for AIDS Project Los Angeles by \$24,000; and for Los Angeles Shanti Foundation by \$13,000, for a total of \$50,000. This was seconded by Commissioner Graney, and approved 4 to 1, with Commissioner Roberts voting no, and Commissioners Davis and Nieto not voting.

Commissioner Graney moved to endorse all remaining recommendations for AIDS-related services. This was seconded by Commissioners Komac and DeCrescenzo, and approved 5 to 0, with Commissioners Davis and Nieto not voting.

Commissioner Graney moved to endorse all remaining recommendations for non-AIDS-related services. This was seconded by Commissioner DeCrescenzo. After discussion, Commissioner Roberts called for the question, and the motion was approved, 5 to 2, with Commissioners Komac and Rosenfeld voting no.

III. NEW BUSINESS

There were no items of new business.

IV. ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION

Chairs Meeting: Commissioner Davis did not attend the last meeting of the commission chairs because it conflicted with the social services subcommittee.

HIV/AIDS & Civil Rights Legislation: Commissioner Graney reported the demise of Life Lobby, and said a new and stronger organization will emerge in its place.

HRMAC: Commissioner Davis reported that the Public Safety Commission would like to become the City's lead liaison to the Human Relations Mutual Assistance Consortium, and this was accepted.

Partners: No additional report.

Recreation: No additional report.

Disabilities Advisory Board: Commissioner Komac reported on the most recent meeting.

Lesbian & Gay Advisory Board: No additional report (see Item VI below).

Senior Advisory Board: Commissioner Nieto reported on the May 18 meeting at Fiesta Hall, which included a presentation by Sheriff's Deputy Rich Peña; a presentation on the June 2 ballot initiatives by Jeff Book; and the swearing-in of new board members by Mayor Steve Martin.

V. ITEMS FROM STAFF

Having reviewed the Commission actions, Daphne Dennis reported that staff concurs with establishing the Alzheimer's Association and PAWS L.A. as priorities for contracts in the event of mid-year contract savings; and with the \$2,500 increase for Alternative

Living for the Aging (ALA) and corresponding decrease for Jewish Family Services. Staff does not concur with the recommendation of additional funding for Foundation House, nor with the higher contract amounts recommended by the Commission for AIDS Healthcare Foundation, AIDS Project Los Angeles, and Shanti Foundation.

Staff will prepare a Council Item indicating the recommendations of both staff and the Commission, and this will proceed to the Council for action on Monday, August 3.

VI. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC

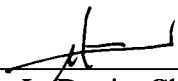
Eight people commented on social services funding: (1) Julie Jaskol of Los Angeles Free Clinic, with regard to health care and other women's issues; (2) Helen Levin of Russian Community Center, with regard to the need for additional funding for citizenship classes; (3) Vivian Sauer and (4) Joan Lindell of Jewish Family Services, thanking Commission members for their support; (5) Colleen Johnson of AIDS Project Los Angeles; (6) Dan Levy, who introduced himself as the new liaison from the Lesbian & Gay Advisory Board; (7) Kathy Watt of Van Ness Recovery House, who commented on the availability of meeting space for 12-step programs, the paramount role of prevention in AIDS-related services, the development of a Women's Calendar with a resources referral card, and the challenge of developing lesbian-related programming in the absence of specifically lesbian-related agencies to make proposals; and (8) Paulina Tsikan of Russian Jewish Community Cultural Center, who favored expanding city funding for youth services, and stated that RJCCC rents space from, but is totally independent of, the Chabad synagogue.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

The next meeting is at 6 p.m., Tuesday, August 11, 1998, in the Community Conference Room at City Hall.

MINUTES APPROVED AUGUST 11, 1998



Steven L. Davis, Chair

Date



Jeff Book, Recording Secretary

Date